

## Humorous Department.

## CHANGED HIS BUSINESS.

Merrill, one of the leading grocers in Danbury, made a rather unfortunate speculation in the way of a clerk last week. He was a middle-aged man, with a white face, large eyes, and a decidedly subdued expression of face. He was a relative of Mr. Merrill, and had for the past ten years been laboring as a collector for the Methodist church in Illinois. His health failed, he was obliged to give up his work, and so he came East to visit his relatives and look up some other business. While here Mr. Merrill thought to take him in the grocery as a clerk, but the experiment was not a success.

"He's just as honest as the day is long," explained Mr. Merrill to the writer, "and as industrious as a bee, but that Methodist traveling business had got so on him that he couldn't shake it off, no how, and I don't know that the poor man will do unless he goes back to the same work. He made it pretty warm for several of our customers before I heard of it, but he meant for the best without a doubt," added Mr. Merrill, more cheerfully.

It was a Tuesday morning that the assistant on his duties as clerk. Mr. Merrill's enquirer had gone out with the team in quest of orders. Mr. Merrill had a barrel of syrup in the cellar to draw off, and he went down there to attend to it, leaving the new man in the store to wait on customers.

It was not a busy day in the grocery, so the grocer availed himself of the fact, and his own proximity to break in his wife's relative. The first customer was a young woman in quest of rice. The new clerk went to the head of the stairs to learn the price, then reported to her.

"Five cents a pound," said she. "I thought it was only four."

"Five is the price, my dear friend," he pleasantly replied.

She took several pounds.

Next came a buxom-looking woman who wanted to see some clothes-line. There were three kinds. He got the price of them, and then prepared to deal with her. There was only one kind that suited her, but she didn't like the price—two dollars.

"I'll give you a dollar and a half," she said.

"I couldn't possibly take a cent less than two dollars, my unconverted friend," he explained, in an impressive voice.

The woman started, and looked curiously at him.

"I'll give you a dollar seventy-five," she finally said, still looking surprised.

"I'm sorry," he replied, "but I must have two dollars, unconverted woman."

She started again, gave him a searching look, and shot out of the store.

The new clerk put up the lines, and took his position back of the counter to patiently wait another call. It presently came. It was a short man with auburn hair and a freckled countenance. He wanted to buy a ham. The price was given him.

"Eighteen cents," he whispered, as if the price had nearly taken away his breath.

"Yes, sir. Eighteen cents, my wayward friend."

"But it ain't worth but sixteen, ham ain't," protested the stranger.

"But just look at the quality of this ham, my hardened sir."

The customer looked at the clerk instead. He was evidently surprised at something.

"I'll give you sixteen cents," he finally said.

"Eighteen I must have, unconverted one," softly replied the clerk.

"What's that?" sharply inquired the short man, with a flushing face.

"I say eighteen is the least I can take. If you will pause a moment and consider, wretched man."

"What's that?" again asked the auburn-haired man, with elevated voice and flashing eyes.

"Don't get excited, I pray you," expostulated the clerk in a sweet voice. "This ham is something far superior to what you have been used to having. I can assure you, my utterly lost and damned sir—"

The new clerk suddenly paused here to jump upon the counter, being induced thereto by the extraordinary movements of the short man with the freckles, who having pulled off his coat in an incredibly short space of time, and flung it on the floor, and shed his hat in the same direction, was now rolling up the sleeves of his shirt and dancing around the room in a wild and incoherent manner. The noise attracting the attention of Mr. Merrill in the cellar, he hurried up stairs, and was astonished beyond measure to see the new clerk on the counter, with a butter ladle in his hand, excitedly warding off the blows of a coarse and hairless stranger, in the delirium of rage.

"Utterly lost and damned, am I?" screamed the short man, making a vicious pass at the new clerk's knees, and catching the edge of the ladle on his knuckles.

Mr. Merrill rushed speedily to the rescue of his clerk. Explanations followed, the short man was quieted but scarcely satisfied, and went away without the ham. The new clerk got down from the counter very much subdued, and peace again resumed her beneficent sway in the grocery. But the clerkship was given up by mutual consent—Danbury News.

THE QUAKER AND THE LAWYER.—"Friend Broadbent," said Zephaniah Stralaine to his master, a rich Quaker, "thou canst not eat of that leg of mutton at noontide meal to-day."

"Wherefore not?" asked the good Quaker.

"Because the dog that apprehendeth to that son of Belial, whom the world calls Lawyer Foxcraft, hath come into thy pantry and stolen—yes, and he hath eaten it."

"Beware, friend Zephaniah, of bearing false witness against thy neighbor. Art thou sure it was friend Foxcraft's domestic animal?"

"Yes, verily, I saw it with my eyes, and it was Lawyer Foxcraft's dog—even Pincheon."

"Upon what evil times have we fallen!" sighed the harmless Quaker, as he wended his way to his neighbor's office. "Friend Foxcraft," said he, "I want to ask thy opinion."

"I am all attention," replied the scribe, laying down his pen.

"Supposing, friend Foxcraft, that my dog had gone into my neighbor's pantry and stolen therefrom a leg of mutton, and I see him, and could call him by name, what ought I to do?"

"Pay for the mutton—nothing can be clearer."

"Know, then, friend Foxcraft, thy dog, even the beast denominated Pincheon, hath stolen from my pantry a leg of mutton of the just value of four shillings and sixpence, which I paid in the market this morning."

"O, then it is my opinion that I must pay for it. And he having done so, the worthy friend turned to depart."

"Tarry yet awhile, friend Broadbent," cried the lawyer. "Of a verity I have yet further to say unto thee. Thou owest me nine shillings for advice."

"Then, verily, I must pay thee; and it is my opinion that I have touched pitch and been defiled."

A new prison chaplain was recently appointed in a certain town. He was a man who greatly magnified his office, and entering one of the cells, on his first round of inspection, he with much pomposity thus addressed the prisoner who occupied it.

"Well, sir, do you know who I am?"

"No; nor I dinna care," was the nonchalant rejoinder.

"Well, I'm your new chaplain."

"Well, ye are? Well, I have heard o' ye before."

"And what did you hear?" returned the chaplain, his curiosity getting the better of his dignity.

"I heard that that the last two kirk's preached them baith empty."

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## The Farm and Fireside.

## COMFORTS OF LIFE.

It is evident to the most cursory observer that multitudes of the human family deprive themselves of many comforts which nature has placed within their reach. In fact, no inconsiderable number of our race enjoy no comforts at all. If these people fail to reach heaven, their case will be a most deplorable one—misery during life-time, and torture in eternity. Most of the abjectly miserable are the authors of their own wretchedness. They are either lazy or profligate; or, which is more frequently the case, they are both. The abandoned are generally miserable. Poverty and misery follow the lazy and profligate, as the shadow follows the substance. Respecting the riff-raff of society this has always been true; but in our country scarcely any of us enjoy all the blessings which a kind Providence has placed within our reach.

It is not expected that our country should have reached as high a degree of development as we find in England. It is only two hundred years since our country was an unbroken forest. Still we have not made advances in some directions that we might have made. Our dwellings houses are seldom constructed with a view either to comfort or permanency. It is a rare thing to find a farm house that was constructed in the last century, and few of those constructed recently will be worth much when the next century is ushered in. Our fathers, from a variety of causes, had at first to be content with mere temporary structures, which afforded little more than shelter for their owners. In fact, from the earliest settlement of our State, and in fact of most of the Southern States, the majority of the best citizens have not felt themselves permanently located. Their eyes have been turned to some other section of the country.

This migratory feeling has had two bad effects upon our country. It has prevented the improvement of the soil, and it has also stood in the way of accumulating the comforts of life. In some sections of America, real estate is constantly increasing in both marketable and intrinsic value. The reason, or at least one reason and the main reason, is that improvements are made upon these lands which are permanent in their nature and add greatly to the comfort of the inhabitants.

Orchards are planted, good dwelling houses are constructed, and necessary out houses are erected. These things increase the material wealth of the country and have a direct tendency to make life pleasant. They do more than this. Whatever has a tendency to make us comfortable has a tendency to elevate us socially and morally. Property is worth nothing if it does not contribute to our comfort in this world. Vast amounts of property may be accumulated, and still the comfort of the possessor not be in the least increased. In such cases the rich are miserably poor.

On the other hand, a small amount of property may be so arranged that it contributes directly to the comfort of its owner. In this case the poor man is rich. "Man needs but a little here below," still it is possible to have a little deal and have nothing that adds to his comfort—nothing that makes life desirable—nothing that contributes in the least to the elevation of the moral and social condition of his neighborhood.

It strikes us that Southern farmers rarely think of comfort. They work often to accumulate simply to have; seldom do they strive to smooth the rough places and straighten the crooked places in life's journey.

FALL PLOUGHING.—Without elaborating the many strong points in favor of fall ploughing, we will state a few of the prominent benefits to be derived from it.

1. August or September is a good time to turn over bound-out soil and manure and re-seed it at once to grass, obtaining a crop of grass the following year.

2. October and November is an excellent time to break up soil for planting the following year.

3. The weather is then cool and bracing, and the team is strong and hearty for work; while the winter in spring is more relaxing and the team is less able; and spring work being always hurrying, it saves time to despatch as much of the ploughing as possible during the previous autumn.

4. Soil laid broken up in the autumn will be quite firm from growing grass the following spring, the root of the late overturned sod being so generally killed by the immediately succeeding winter that not much grass will readily start in the spring.

5. The frosts of winter disintegrate the ploughed land, so that it readily crumbles in fine particles in the spring, and a deep, melow, seed bed is easily made. The chemical changes and modifications resulting from atmospheric action during the winter, develop latent fertility in the upturned furrows, which, together with the mellowing influences, materially increase the crop.

6. Most kinds of insects are either wholly destroyed, or their depredations materially checked, by fall ploughing; especially the cutworm, white grub and the cut worm.

7. Corn stubble land may be ploughed late in the fall, and thus be ready for very early sowing in the spring, thereby going far to insure a good catch of grass; the root of the new seedling getting well hold, or being well embellished before the drouths of summer come on.

BUILD UP A HOMESTEAD.—The feeling that you are settled and fixed will induce you to work to improve your farms, to plant orchards, to set out shade trees, to enclose pastures, to build comfortable out-houses, and their taste more to your homes. This will bind you sentimentally in the family. Your wives and daughters will fall in love with the country; your sons will love home better than grog-shops, and prefer farming to measuring tape or professional loafing, and you will be happy in seeing the contented and cheerful faces of your families. Make your home beautiful, convenient and pleasant, and your children will love it above all places; they will leave it with regret, think of it with fondness, come back to it joyfully, and seek their chief happiness around their home fireside. Women and children need more than meat, bread and raiment; more than a comfortable and convenient home, and a plan more of every for the future, than has yet come to the light; base officials and intense partisans, make dupes and tools of the ignorant and easily led, to plunder and burn, ambush and slay the helpless and exposed, the unsuspicious and inoffensive, and still retain their positions with bold effrontery and shameless mendacity.

But we must pause. The ringing cry of nobler leaders and worthy representatives has been sounded in our ears and fired the public mind with an enthusiasm and unanimity among the true and virtuous, which promises, with God's blessing, to brighten our horizon and secure peace and prosperity within our borders, to which we have been so long strangers. We must look rather nearer home and see in ourselves, which calls for a more humble and reverent before God, and which may, in a measure, explain the cause of many of our distresses and the continuance of chastening from the arm of the Almighty. Are there not those who with impiety and unbelief, as "Is there a God in the heavens?" Who mock at the inspired Word and cast constant slur upon precept and promise, article and creed, threat and denunciation, judgment and perdition? Who violate the Sabbath and abuse the sacred and say they have done no wrong? Have we not idolaters here, and everywhere, who worship the "golden calf," and in their haste to be rich, violate conscience, swear falsely, and mutilate unjust gains, and traffic in human souls, the things of eternity, for the things of this world—gain the world, but lose the undying soul?

Are not profanity and drunkenness, immorality and licentiousness, loss of moral obligation and high integrity, indifference to God and violation of the first four as well as the last six commands of the decalogue, alas! too common and apparent, not among the ignorant and poor, but the more intelligent and influential? In the Church, too, the dwelling

## Reading for the Sabbath.

## SERMON,

DELIVERED BY  
REV. R. P. JOHNSON,  
Pastor of the "Church of God," in Yorkville, on  
Thursday, 30th of October, 1876.

"If my people, which are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." 2 Chronicles, vii. 14.

A glorious temple, in honor of Jehovah, had just been erected by King Solomon after years of preparation and patient labor. The magnificent structure had been solemnly dedicated and the prayer of consecration uttered by the then devout and grateful and prosperous prince. He had pleaded most earnestly in behalf of the people, Israel, that should they be visited with war and national calamity on account of their sins, and then seek deliverance in prayer, humiliation and repentance, that God would hear their cause and forgive their iniquity. And God was pleased to hear the prayer of his servant and accept for his own this temple reared for his glory:

"And the Lord appeared unto Solomon by night and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and have chosen this place to myself for a house of sacrifice. If I send pestilence upon thee, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send famine upon thee, and if my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." Note this important truth, that God will forgive their sin and will heal their land. Solomon's own ground and sanctifies the very means suggested—humiliation and prayer—as the great means to be used in every national emergency.

"If evil is in the city," God hath done it or permitted it. If calamity befalls a people it has been sent by a power above as a judgment for sin, and the true remedy is humiliation and prayer to God for forgiveness and his future blessing. Hence the propriety of this day's appointment and observance. Those who have named the day, modestly and properly say "that they have no official authority for so doing, and feel that, under ordinary circumstances, its propriety, as relating to the triumph of a party in a political contest, might be questioned. But the present is no party contest, nor do we receive for laboring for the more or less of any one man, or the whole people, or our protestations are false. This being our conviction, we venture to bring our case before the tribunal of Almighty justice and invoke divine aid in behalf of our afflicted people," &c. And we are glad to know that in Charleston and throughout the State, as well as here in our own town, many will unite in humbling themselves before God and supplicating that "justice, peace and prosperity, mercy and truth, with fellowship and good feeling to all men, may come back and prevail among our long suffering and much distressed people."

Let us look first at the duty of humiliation as now required at our hands.

We have reached a crisis in the history of our country and State, of momentous consequences for the future. The whole country, from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, and from ocean to ocean, throbs with more than usual excitement and deep anxiety. And nearer home, in our own State, feeling runs higher than it has done since civil war raged and laid waste and made sorrowful. May those days never return again, but all peaceful means be used to accomplish results so much needed and coveted; so long waited for, and yet only now apparently at hand and to be permanently enjoyed.

But as then, so also now, the truth is maintained, that national prosperity and national virtue are as closely allied on the one hand, as are national calamity and wickedness on the other. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, while sin is a reproach to any people." The one will surely bring down Heaven's blessing, and the other Heaven's curse. And whenever a cloud settles over our prosperous land, be it in the form of pestilence, or famine, war or discord, it certainly signifies that sin has been committed and that God is angry.

And sin did abound, North and South, East and West, and still abounds, to make us tremble and be afraid; humble ourselves before God and cry mightily to Him, "to forgive our sin and heal our land." The picture is a melancholy one, and yet, alas! too true. It has been thus strongly drawn. "As a nation, we are a disgrace to the estimation of others, and what is worse, our own; and our faith in our government, vile disorder, and vicious pollution in the legislative bodies, which ought to be fountains of truth, honor and reverend law; corruption in our officials, from the members of the cabinet to the post office clerk; hoodwinked partnerships with crime, or bought indifference to it in our courts of justice; shameless abuse of the Godlike mitigating or remitting punishment in our executives; and trickery, fraud and open violence, universally turning the elective franchise into a worthless name, or a miserable instrument of traitorous conspiracy to defraud the country of its noblest inheritance and best possession. These things defile us as a people. They cover our glory, our popular liberty, our constitutional order, our administrative policy. They are detestable law and debauching justice. They are inoculating the community in its very lifeblood, with the foul leprosy of vice. They are fast making it an utter stench in the nostrils of humanity. Such things could not be but for the shallow superficiality of our notions about sin."

When we look at our own State, "wickedness in high places" rules and oppresses; dishonesty and villainy are unchecked and prosper; wrong-doing and crime are encouraged and go unpunished; corruption and bribery, falsehood and perjury, violence and bloodshed prevail and make sad; knave confederates with knave, and fiend with fiend, to covet or vice and deeds of darkness, and a plan more of every for the future, than has yet come to the light; base officials and intense partisans, make dupes and tools of the ignorant and easily led, to plunder and burn, ambush and slay the helpless and exposed, the unsuspicious and inoffensive, and still retain their positions with bold effrontery and shameless mendacity.

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ing God, how low is the standard of piety, how full of deterioration and decline, in tone and character, do we find many "who profess and call themselves Christians," how worldly in spirit and habit; how marked in ingratitude and fault finding, discontent and distrust; how full of pride and prejudice, animosity and bitterness towards fellow-men, still cherished and gloried in, although so utterly wrong and detrimental to the peace and harmony of the world. How easily and how sin to sin until, as individuals and a people, our iniquities would increase and multiply, so many in number and so weighty in guilt, as to make plain that sin has separated between us and our God, and called loudly for correction and punishment.

We have thought, too, dear brethren, that there was one sin in the past, that stood out in prominence and yet we saw it not, and for which we are still suffering a fearful retribution, being chastened just in the quarter where there was most unfaithfulness. The reference is, to our not rendering thanks always when we are "just and equal" in the way of religious instruction and nurture. We regarded them too much as personal property to minister to personal and family pride, comfort and aggrandizement, and forgot, often, in caring for their bodies, which selfishly called for, to care also, for their immortal souls and spiritual well-being. It is true and we rejoice in the fact, that many did feel their responsibility and act accordingly, but many more did disregard duty, and while caring for the souls of their own children, were utterly negligent of the souls of their servants. Much was done indeed in this respect, and our own State, so much was well done, and as a people we were not faithless to our trust; we did not "render as masters what was just and equal."

We allowed the Bible to be a sealed book to hundreds and thousands, and failed to provide competent and true instructors for those who had a right to expect food for the body and food for the soul.

In old Jacob's life, his sin of deception and falsehood and wrong to his blind father and impulsive brother, continually found him out and followed him to the grave. And so with us, sin committed, either as individuals or a people, long years ago, may still make itself known, to darken life and mar happiness and cause sadness and rebuke from Him who is of "purer eyes than to behold iniquity," and siteth in the heavens judging righteously. Let it arise, then, that the people who have made, for awhile, to triumph over his superior; the servant to rule his master; the ignorant exact laws for the intelligent; the entire reversal of order as it once existed take place and the words of Solomon be verified, "Folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low places." I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth. And yet for these ignorant and misguided ones, these children in experience and character, who have been "more sinned against than sinning," we must plead for a little more of patience and forbearance and charity and hope. The recollection of years of faithful labor, of close attention to sickness and trouble, of a wonderful attachment and devotion on the battle-field to dead and dying and wounded; of care and protection given to women and children at home; must not be annulled as a trifle, and feelings cherished and allowed to grow, that imply to exalted measures, much better avoided, and to the commission of more sins than those already scored against us, very likely to block our path and darken hope that dawn and challenge the further wrath of one who says, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay saith the Lord." "We have sinned, and have committed iniquity and have done wickedly and have rebelled even by departing from thy precepts and thy judgments." "O Lord to us thy obsequious confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers because we have sinned against thee." Daniel, ix. 5 and 8. Is not the first duty becoming us this day, one of deep humiliation and true contrition of soul? "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at my word." "And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart and their wives apart."

But our duty is not yet done. Prayer must follow humiliation or the blessings sought, of forgiveness and healing, cannot be expected. "I beseech you, my people, shall pray and seek my face," \* \* \* "then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

We pass on then to note also the duty of prayer in the day of a people's calamity and distress.

If God afflicts, God must relieve and overrule for good. The source from whence trouble comes, is also our best resource in adversity. It was prayer that brought an abundance of rain for the thirsty land, when the Prophet went up to Carmel and bid his servant look seven times for the coming cloud and have sevenfold blessing. It was prayer that saved Israel from the Assyrian hosts and Israel from the Babylonians, that gave Othniel his victory over the king of Mesopotamia, and Barak his over the Canaanites, and Gideon his over the Midianites, and Jehoshaphat his over the children of Ammon and Moab. It was prayer, when the Ninevites laid themselves in sackcloth, that caused God to spare their great city, "wherein were more than six score thousand people that could not discern between their right hand and their left hand." It was prayer that God continued to hear in behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah, so long as Abraham persisted in asking. Yes, it was in answer to prayer, that success crowned the efforts of our forefathers in their contest with the heathen in the Province of New York. It was prayer that secured the triumph of Philadelphia. And God thus sought and continued to be sought, was found and signally manifested his favor, and the then infant Republic secured a name and place among the nations of the world. It is true, that after years of success and wonderful prosperity, section became arrayed against section, and civil war, long impending, ensued with its heavy train of disaster and loss and evil and utter failure to the South to establish a separate nationality. We, too, prayed and prayed earnestly, in those days, for success; but our prayers were unheard and unanswered, as we desired. Sin may be a hindrance to prayer; but God may have had in store for us greater blessings than those which we once so earnestly craved and sought to obtain. The fact is, however, before us now, that a hundred years have rolled by and the Republic of the United States of America still exists, a mighty nation, great in resources, strong in power and influence. What is before us in the future and about to be unfolded, we cannot tell. We wait in faith and patience, and hope for the ballot to secure for us a country to be loved and a government to be respected and honored, and so, can well pray that all things may be so ordered and settled upon the

best and surest foundations; that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, may be established among us for all generations. And in our own State, where the call is so loud for reform and good government, for security and confidence, for relief from oppression and wrong, for quietness and order, peace and prosperity, for the end of all that is evil and the beginning of all that is good, earnest and united should be our petitions to the merciful and true God who would hear and forgive and heal our land. Surely our cause is just, and not a point of mere supremacy for supremacy sake. "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open unto their prayers." We see signs of coming good, and that God will yet "make the wrath of man to praise him." The feeling is widespread in behalf of united supplication for the divine aid and blessing. The enthusiasm roused among the long past and discouraged, is as general as the look for the outside sentiment throughout the country. Our belief is strong, and our true position is becoming better understood every day as facts are published and circulated. The occupation of our State, in different parts, by the military, excites neither panic nor resistance, for when called on they have already acted as protectors and not foes; friends and not oppressors; and the result may be a safe and quiet and true vote, on the fast approaching day of trial. The party in power is much divided and distracted, the more intelligent and worthy having pledged themselves to act with the reformers, and more defections are daily taking place. The blacks, for the first time, are willing to hear the whites and ally themselves with those who are worthy of trust, and will fulfill every pledge and do justly before God and man. While the prospect then, is most encouraging for relief and restoration from our own efforts at home, with God's blessing, these may also come to us from without, and be more permanently and fully secured. "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."

It is only for us to "pray and faint not"—to make every honorable effort, and leave the result with God, who, while "man proposes He ever disposes"; to bear ourselves as Christians in word and deed, and not yield to the current that sweeps across the land, to exercise firm faith in the love and mercy, wisdom and power, truth and justice, of God, and to encourage others to trust no man and trust ever; to try ourselves whether there be any wickedness in us, and go forward in the way everlasting; to see, as events transpire, that we "sanctify the Lord God in our own hearts and become more and more to be 'fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God.'" Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

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